

# Interviews with Ian Stuart Donaldsson

## Phil Walmsley Sets the Record Straight - Skrewdriver 1976-78

The band existed as two very distinct entities, Skrewdriver Mk1 evolved out of the punk explosion that gripped Britain in 1976. The early period was all about the music, the fashion, and four lads from the north west of England having a good time. Two years later the impetus had gone, bad decisions had been made, key players had left and a lack of musical focus led to their decline into a very average rock (not punk) band. They limped on into early 1980 before finally expiring. Then two years later singer Ian Stuart revived the name with totally different personnel and the full National Front manifesto. Unfortunately the image of Skrewdriver will be forever tarnished by the extreme political affiliations of this later incarnation. People are entitled to their own opinions but this is not the place to debate the rights or wrongs of Ian Stuart's politics as expressed through Skrewdriver Mk2. This is the story of those exciting early days of 76-78.

I met up with original guitarist Phil for the first time in 26 years at the Thatched House, a pub in the centre of Poulton that we'd frequented on many occasions in our youth. We talked for a long time and drank far too much beer while looking back over his 15 minutes of fame with Skrewdriver. At the end of the evening we agreed to meet up again, this time with my tape recorder running. On 16th November 2003 we were ready to roll....

A word of explanation. Ian Stuart was the chosen stage name of Ian Stuart Donaldson. As far as its owner was concerned the Donaldson surname wasn't really very rock 'n roll. However to those of us who'd known him through school and on into Skrewdriver he was Don, which is how Phil refers to him in the words that follow.

The long hot British Summer of 1976 was a musical turning point for many. Something was stirring, initially in London but the word soon spread north. Members of Tumbling Dice, a rather uninspiring Poulton rock band, headed for Manchester.

"Don and I, and I think the McKay twins, were at the Pistols second gig at the Lesser Free Trade Hall, Manchester in July 76. The experience that night was above all else the catalyst for what we did later. When I started at University in September 76 a couple of guys who I met early on were really into the up and coming punk scene. It was with them that I started going over to Eric's Club in Liverpool. We'd be there at every opportunity and Don would come over at weekends and sleep on my floor. I was the only one who had a car at the time so I had to drive everywhere. During Freshers' week at Manchester University the Strangers played at a dingy little club called the Squat. They caused quite a stir, they weren't a punk band as such but they had the attitude. During this period we set about transforming what was left of Tumbling Dice into a serious punk band, convinced we could compete with the best."

Some sort of demo tape was needed to spread the word and hopefully win over record company A&R men.

"We made the demo at Don's Dad's factory in Blackpool, the acoustics were terrible, a great big draughty old warehouse, full of machinery. We didn't have any decent recording equipment, we used Don's music centre [combined turntable, tape deck, amp etc] which had a

microphone input, it was pretty dreadful but that's all we had. We ran off a few copies and sent them out. This must have been about November 76. We liked the New York Dolls sound, we covered Pills which was a regular part of our set all through 1977. We did Gloria in a similar fashion to the Eddie and the Hotrods version, and we used to do Louie Louie, we'd also written about half a dozen songs ourselves. The originals were all written by Don and myself really, I didn't write lyrics, apart from Better off Crazy, I'm not too sure what inspired the lyrics to that! It was just a great guitar riff, it was the first thing I wrote in the punk vein, rather in the style of Gloria."

Chiswick Records, based in London's Camden Town, liked the raw sound. Roger Armstrong recalls his initial impressions.

"They sent in a tape from Blackpool with an hilarious photo of them in torn blazers and flares standing in front of Blackpool Tower. The whole thing was so gormless and the tape such a noise I couldn't resist. They were part of that second generation of Punks inspired by the Pistols. I think that the motivation for signing them was a reaction against the studied arty side of the Pistols and the Clash as projected by their management."

Chiswick, keen to get in on the action, wrote back straight away.

"We got a letter back from Chiswick which said that they were very keen and would like to come and see the band in action. We couldn't believe it. They were run by Ted Carroll and Roger Armstrong both Dubliners. Ted formerly managed Thin Lizzy and he owned the Rock On record shop in Camden Town which was a specialist record shop where you could buy obscure and collectable records. It was a popular place, everybody who was part of the music scene could be seen there at some time or other. Upstairs was the office they used for Chiswick Records."

Meanwhile the man from Chiswick was boarding a train at Euston Station and heading for north west England. "Roger Armstrong caught the train up to Blackpool and we said we'd meet him at the station. We wondered how we'd recognise him. We didn't have any problem after he told us that there wouldn't be many people alighting from a train at Blackpool wearing red winkle pickers and drainpipe jeans! He was right. He came to the factory and listened to us go through our stuff, and he was really impressed, I think we were all a bit taken aback. This guy knew the Pistols, he was part of the scene in London, things we'd only read about. It was fantastic really."

The band needed a name, so a list of possibilities was drawn up and Skrewdriver was chosen. A more polished recording was also required so that Chiswick could assess their potential new assets in advance of contract negotiations, and to help get them on the London gig circuit.

"They wanted us down to record some demos at the Riverside studio in Hammersmith. We had to do all our recording after 10.00pm, they used to book studio time overnight because it was half the price. They put us up at a hotel in King's Cross, Grinny managed to set the fire alarms off with a cigarette. We had the attic room with the very low ceiling and Grinny was lying on the bed smoking and the alarm went off. Everybody, including some rather dodgy looking characters, had to tumble out onto the street in the middle of the night."

When not recording they were soaking up the vibrant north London atmosphere and getting to know other Chiswick artists.

"Rock On had a stall on Camden Market at weekends. Camden Market was where everybody used to hang out, it was where a lot of the first punk fanzines and independent records were sold, gigs were advertised, badges, T shirts etc. It was a really good scene, when we were in London we spent a lot of time there, especially at weekends. We'd also hang out at the record shop talking to Roger and Ted, making plans and all that sort of thing. The 101ers had been on Chiswick, although they'd split by then Joe Strummer was still a regular visitor to the shop. Chiswick were also trying to sign Elvis Costello but he went to Stiff. Motorhead were signed at the time, as were the Count Bishops with Johnny Guitar who later joined the Feelgoods, they also had a great band called the Gorillas. We used to go to each other's gigs, if any Chiswick band were playing we'd be there. It was just ligging but it was great, a real eye opener at the time."

Their first gig as Skrewdriver was actually a long way from London at Manchester Polytechnic, Cavendish House in February 77, supporting Chiswick stablemates Little Bob Story. "What a band they were, they did a great version of the Small Faces' All or Nothing. We were so nervous it was unbelievable, we'd never played in front of an audience properly, it was packed. I reckon the vast majority of the student audience had never actually seen a punk band but it went down really well. I can't remember what we played, we just gave it our all for about half an hour and that was it." On a high they headed down to London to record the first single You're So Dumb/Better Off Crazy with Roger Armstrong.

"We'd done the demos from which they chose You're So Dumb, we weren't entirely convinced, we thought it was a bit too much of a thrash, but they were the guys in the know, and they paid the money. We recorded the single soon after"

16th April 1977 was their London debut supporting Johnny Moped at the Roxy in Covent Garden. The gig was reviewed by the influential fanzine Sniffin' Glue who were impressed.

"Chiswick then offered us a deal, the terms were that we'd have to relocate, it was big decision time. Grinny, Kev and Don quit their jobs straight away, so it all hinged on me, basically we had to go in April or not at all. I was talked into it but in an attempt to keep my options open I made it a condition that I had to be able to take my first year exams. If things didn't work out I'd have something to fall back on. They agreed to that which was pretty good really, we had to go down in April and the exams were coming up in May/June. I didn't tell my parents, they didn't know until years later, I would ring them from London and pretend it was Manchester. I ended up missing the last month of lectures at University, then there was a few weeks for revision but I wasn't doing much of that!"

It was time to move to the big city, the accommodation was not exactly luxurious.

"Chiswick had this arrangement with a landlady in Tufnell Park. She owned a big Edwardian terraced house and we had one room for the four of us. No beds, a double mattress and two singles on the floor and barely space between them to tread, that was it! There was one bathroom between about eight people and one horrendous kitchen. We survived on a diet of potatoes and baked beans. The landlady was called Nora she seemed a bit unhinged at times, she had two dogs and they weren't house trained so you had to watch where you walked! The

place was filthy. Chiswick paid the rent and they paid us a wage £15 a week, that's all we got whatever we did. We could be recording, gigging, or anything else but we still got our £15."

There were other interesting people at the same address.

"We met Steve Harrington (soon to be Steve Strange) shortly after he arrived from Cardiff. He had a room in Nora's house and worked as personal manager for Generation X, whatever that entailed. He was unique and was soon heralded as a punk fashion guru, he wasn't going to stick around with us for long. He persuaded Don that he needed an image makeover if he was to stand out from the crowd, and offered to take him shopping down the King's Road. Unfortunately Don was too 'cool' to try anything on! Much of the stuff they got didn't fit or he never wore because of adverse comment, with the exception of a pair of black leather pants. This was the start of the Gene Vincent phase complete with dyed black hair, sideys and biker jacket. I thought it suited his hard man image, but it didn't last for long."

The group needed somebody to take care of the non playing side of things.

"Chiswick employed a manager, a girl called Effie, she was from Birmingham, I don't know what her real name was, she was full of enthusiasm and energy. I think she'd been around the punk scene since the beginning, she had an impressive list of acquaintances which included Chris Miller aka Rat Scabies. I guess she was paid a wage by Chiswick, it was up to her to make sure we got where we were supposed to be on time and PAs were hired and the gear was alright. We never knew how the gigs came about, how much we were 'paid' for gigs, or what agents they used, it was all sorted out by Chiswick and Effie. We just got our £15."

Skrewdriver's roadie/van driver was already part of the punk scene.

"We didn't have a roadie at first, but when we started gigging quite a lot we hired a guy called Paul Hurding. When we met him he was playing drums with Shag Nasty, a punk band from World's End, a council estate down at the end of King's Road. They were keen but pretty dire, they used to support X Ray Specs every Sunday night at a pub called the Man in the Moon. On Sunday nights that was the place to go. Loads of people used to go down there, the Pistols would occasionally be there, after the gig there'd always be a party at a flat somewhere on the estate. We met Paul down there, he'd been at a few of our gigs, we recognised him, he had a van, he was fed up with Shag Nasty so he came to work for us. I think he was on a wage from Chiswick, he was only with us for a few months then he was offered the drum seat in X Ray Specs. One week he was our roadie, next week he was off to the USA with X Ray Specs after they signed a major record deal."

BP Hurding was drummer with X Ray Specs until they split, he was later a founder member of Classix Nouveau who were fronted by the bald, charismatic vocalist Sal Solo and had a sizeable hit with Guilty.

"So that was the team, the four of us, Paul and Effie. Effie was with us all the time. If the music press were there she was in her element, the Paul Morleys and Julie Burchills of this world. Burchill gave us a real slating in the NME on one occasion and Don hated her guts."

Experiences on the London gig scene were many and varied. Although technically no great singer, Don was beginning to build the aggressive swagger and confidence that made him a good frontman.

"The Roxy became a regular, we played there quite a few times, that was the place to be. Dingwalls, we did on more than one occasion. I remember the gig with the Movies, that was pretty early, a bit of a difficult one. The Movies were a Sad Cafe type band, melodic rock, really good musicians, fantastic gear and the place was full of their fans. I vaguely remember doing the Oaks in Chorlton (Manchester), that was a long way to go as we were based in London by then. We did quite a lot of gigs at the Roxy on our own, some with Sham 69, I remember playing there with the Models, the Cortinas, Johnny Moped. The Marquee we did more than once, three times I think. I remember vividly doing the Marquee with Chelsea on the day England had played Scotland at Wembley, the place was full of football supporters and it was a really great night we just couldn't go wrong. I reckon we headlined there once and supported a couple of times, but it was the highlight of the whole thing for me. It was just such a nostalgic place, the dressing rooms hadn't changed they'd never painted it, it was just covered in graffiti. It was a real buzz to play there."

Note for football aficionados, Phil was correct, 4th June 1977, Wembley, England 1 (Channon) Scotland 2 (McQueen, Dalglish). Oh dear!

A live recording exists of a June 77 gig at the Marquee, the actual date is uncertain. It's a bit rough, probably courtesy of a mike in the audience rather than through the desk. If you can get beyond the recording quality a tight and energetic band emerges, no doubt the result of many evenings on the London punk circuit. Frequency of gigging was erratic, there would be gaps of a week or two, then some sort of mini tour, four or five gigs on the trot. Some of the support slots were with well known acts.

"We did quite a few gigs with the Damned. They were on a much bigger tour and we were doing three dates with them in south London and then down to the coast. We did Hastings Pier Pavilion at the height of the summer and the place was full of deckchairs! The last time I'd been there was on holiday with my parents when I was about 14 and they let me go and see Status Quo. The next time I was there we were playing! It was a huge pavilion and there could only have been about 200 people there, you could see that beyond about 20 rows of people it was just deckchairs. I used to love playing with the Damned they were great, I think we got those gigs through Effie because of her friendship with Chris. I remember standing in the wings at one of their gigs and what Chris Miller used to do was he'd cover his drum skins with talcum powder and then the first beat at the start of the first number he'd just hit everything as quick as he could and he'd just disappear in a cloud of white dust, it was a great effect especially with a bright light behind."

As well as the London circuit there were a few provincial gigs.

"We went out to High Wycombe there was a venue there, the Greyhound? Dunstable I seem to recall playing, and we went up to Birmingham to play at a big club called Rebecca's. That was a bad night because we had to come off. The crowd were all tabloid punks who thought it was cool to shower the artistes in saliva. Absolutely awful, it was like standing in a rain storm, a horizontal rainstorm, we went on and it was just coming at us, after the first number we just stopped. The DJ said it had to stop or we wouldn't be back, so we came back on and a bit later a fight broke out and they'd started spitting again, somebody threw a glass at the stage, so we had to go off again. The promoter called it off, we'd only done about four or five numbers, but that was it so we were back in the van to London. It was a pretty grim experience. We didn't really venture anywhere north of Birmingham until later versions of the group. We were really concentrating on London."

Things didn't always run smoothly and there were a few setbacks.

"Sometime around July we'd played the Roxy, all the gear had been taken out and loaded into the van. We'd locked up and gone back inside for a drink, and when we came out the van with all the gear was gone, never to be seen again. Chiswick had to buy us new gear, but there was a delay with the insurance money while the claim was verified. We had a series of gigs coming up so we had to go on the scrounge and Effie knew Paul Weller's Dad quite well. He was managing the Jam, and she arranged for me to borrow Paul's gear for a week because they weren't gigging at the time. I met Paul and his Dad in the Ship Inn on Wardour Street and he gave me his Rickenbacker and Vox AC30 and off I went. Then we met a week later and I handed it back, we had a few jars and that was that."

Another nasty moment occurred after a gig at which Skrewdriver were supported by a new band called the Police who were being groomed for stardom.

"I think it was at the Railway in Putney, we didn't know who the support was going to be, never did really. There were a lot of Press there, more than there would be for us, so we got the feeling something was going on. They used all our back line, apart from the drums, Stewart Copeland would only use his own kit. I don't particularly remember listening to what they were doing. After the gig while we were loading up the van a nearby rock 'n roll club was just emptying out, all these Teds were coming down the road and spotted us. The van was surrounded and we got a right pasting. The police were soon on the scene and the Teds all ran off, but Grinny had been knocked to the floor with a mike stand, one of those with a really heavy metal base, it had come down on his face and before we knew it he was off in an ambulance. We later found he'd lost several teeth and had lots of stitches."

There was even a fleeting TV appearance, if only we could get our hands on the tape.

"It was a show fronted by Janet Street-Porter, she was just an up and coming TV presenter at the time. I think it was for Thames TV, they were doing an item on the punk scene and she wanted to interview us at a café in Notting Hill. We went along and all the lights and cameras were there, we just sat in the café and JSP asked the questions, this lasted about 5 minutes of which about 20 seconds ended up in the programme. Unfortunately I was out of shot, Don, Grinny and Kev were all on but somehow they missed me. I didn't actually say anything, as I recall she talked about Grinny and how he lost his teeth. I never actually saw the programme. Apparently Marc Riley (Mark Radcliffe's sidekick 'Lardy Boy') found a videotape of it and has threatened to send it to me!"

Back in Phil's parallel universe of academia the pressure was on.

"I did my University exams, they put me on the overnight train from Euston to Manchester, I'd take the exam in the morning and get the train back to London in the afternoon. I think the exams lasted for about a week and a half, I don't think I slept, I think they gave me some chemicals to keep me awake. In the end I narrowly scraped the pass mark in the exams, so at the end of the summer if things didn't work out I had something to go back to."

Word of Skrewdriver's growing reputation in the capital had not gone unnoticed back home. There was talk of a showcase gig in Blackpool, but some of the natives were restless.

"Yes, the Blackpool Council fiasco. Chiswick thought it was a great idea for us to play in Blackpool on the bandstand in Stanley Park, it was going to be a Sunday afternoon punk festival with us headlining. Everything was arranged, then objections were raised and after convening a special meeting it was blocked, they didn't want that kind of thing in Blackpool. Although the festival didn't happen there was high profile coverage in the local paper the Evening Gazette which Chiswick looked on as good publicity. We were a bit disappointed to be honest, I think we quite fancied coming back and playing in Blackpool. That was going to be the showcase gig. We actually didn't come back to the Fylde much that summer, just a couple of times I think." During the early part of the summer rehearsals were taking place in advance of recording sessions.

"We had to get a few more songs together, we were using a rehearsal studio which was once quite famous. Studio 51, Great Newport Street was a really happening place in the 60s, the Stones had a residency there and all the R 'n B bands from that time used to play there. It wasn't a club any more I think it was mainly use for storage, that's where we got it together for the album." Sessions started in earnest during August.

"We were back at Riverside and once again it was mainly at night, the engineer was a guy called Neil, good bloke, laid back long haired hippy type. He was very experienced which was just as well because we were complete novices in the studio. All the songs were written by Don and I, apart from the covers of course, but he wrote most of the lyrics. That's an acoustic guitar on Where's it gonna end actually I think Don wrote that riff. The recording sessions were great, it was all new and exciting, although Don would get bored because he didn't smoke and neither did Kev so they'd go off somewhere. It was quite a time consuming process, it would sometimes take several hours just to get the drum sound! We did a few guitar overdubs. Most of the vocals were double tracked to give it more power which meant that Don had to sing the same vocal exactly the same twice."

Were the band happy with the finished product?

"As a package it was a bit of a novelty record, it spun at 45rpm and lasted 26 minutes. Some of the tracks were quite good, I'm quite happy with the part I played bearing in mind the limitations of the time but some of the lyrics are a bit trite. I don't think we got involved enough in the mixing, the bass sound isn't good, some of the tracks are just not charged, not angry enough. Actually the earlier session for the single produced a much more powerful sound."

Not having a huge advance to work with usually meant that the quality of the equipment was little more than average.

"It was a bit frustrating at times, we didn't use valve amps, so there wasn't that really great Marshall sound. The Pistols' sound was fantastic, but then if you look at the gear they had they were playing through Fender amps, Gibson Les Paul guitars, Fender Precision bass. We were using transistor amps with 4x12 Cabinets and it was a struggle, not many people used pedals then, so to try and get the sound you wanted you just had to overdrive your amp which was pretty unsatisfactory."

Back out on the road things were beginning to get a bit unpleasant as the summer progressed.

"The violence was becoming a regular occurrence, Don had started knocking around with a few people who were that way inclined. We played a gig with 999 at the Music Machine which was also the Boomtown Rats' debut, we'd played a good set and so had 999, then Geldof came on with long hair and posing about like Jagger. Don was getting very angry and this guy took it upon himself to teach Geldof a lesson on Don's behalf, or that's how it was seen. He strode up onto the stage walked straight up to Geldof and hit him hard, knocking him over, there was blood everywhere. He then just walked off the other side of the stage and wasn't even thrown out. He came back and stood with us! Don was laughing and patting him on the back. I was very uncomfortable with this, I didn't want any part of it, I think that was perhaps the start of it. The word got round that these people were acquaintances of ours, although in reality they were acquaintances of Don's."

Time was almost up for Phil, disagreements over songwriting credits and the image change were bringing things to the boil.

"I finally quit after things came to a head at Shepperton Studios. We were having a photo session, Roger Armstrong came in and said that the album was due out soon and we needed to sort out the publishing rights for royalties. Who wrote what? Don was adamant that I had not had a significant input to the song writing, we argued about it and he turned to take a swipe at me which I dodged. That was the final straw as far I as was concerned, he wanted to go down the skinhead route, I was not happy about that at all. From his point of view I was going to stand in his way so I think he was looking for some way to get me out. The others had agreed to shave their heads, I was under serious pressure, their view was we were getting nowhere and this was our new direction. Don needed to create some sort of rift to get me out and he got what he wanted."

The record company had to grin and bear it.

"Chiswick seemed to understand, they weren't happy with the bad image that was developing because of our new following. They were putting money in and we needed to promote the product but we couldn't get the gigs, so there wasn't much point in making any more records. I think they would have been quite happy to write off the contract if they'd had the choice."

Roger Armstrong, "The original band were a great punk band, they were about as raw as it gets. The skinhead image was a fashion thing, maybe in hindsight a bit misconceived."

Phil was replaced by Poulton hard man Ron Hartley who had played in various other local bands.

"Ron was quickly on the scene, he looked the part, he had been a skinhead in the past and was quite happy to be one again. There was never any hard feelings between him and me, nor Grinny, but for a while of course to Don I was beneath contempt. I think Effie drifted off the scene around this time, she wasn't happy with the image change and the violence. I think she went back to Birmingham. It was all compressed into about 9 months, but I think I got the best out of it, I didn't have to put up with the painful demise. Shortly after I left I was offered an audition with Adam and the Ants but I wasn't really interested, I suppose it could all have been very different but I've never regretted it. I went back to university having missed the first four weeks of term."



All Skewed Up was finally released in early November 1977. Although Ron Hartley is featured on the album sleeve the original liner notes acknowledged that Phil played all the guitar parts. Roy Carr in the New Musical Express, the UK's most influential rock publication, gave it the thumbs up. His closing comments were very positive. "Skrewdriver don't need to warm up other people's leftovers because in singer Ian, these Blackpool boot-boys have (potentially) one of the best gravel throated vocalists to emerge this year, whilst Ron (guitar), Kev (bass) and Grinny (drums) give the listener the distinct impression that they would be better deployed on more adventurous chords and rhythms."

"Although Chiswick were a small label they had distribution and publishing deals with some of the big companies, I'm sure EMI were one of them, so their records were sold all over the world. I didn't get any royalties while I was with the band, the publishing hadn't been sorted out properly, it always takes time to come through. Then every three months or so royalty cheques and statements were sent to my Mum and Dad's address, this went on for a couple of years until they deleted the records from the catalogue. It wasn't a fortune of course but it was amazing to see the statistics. The statements would detail how many copies of which record had sold in which country and what the royalty was. We sold records all over the place, Australia, Canada, we sold a lot in Scandinavia. I think Anti Social sold about 14000 copies in the first two weeks in the UK."

Were there ever any indications of the future Skrewdriver political agenda?

"Our music did not have any serious political content, I don't recall Don being politically active at the time, other than the normal sexual/racist prejudices that prevailed. There was however, always an aggressive undercurrent with Don, ever since school. He was a volatile character, always prone to explosions of violence at the least provocation, especially after a drink. He was great fun to be with most of the time, very generous, he would always buy you a pint if you were skint, always back you up if you got in a sticky corner. A great pal when your face fitted. Above all, he sought notoriety and attention, which he finally achieved."

At this point we jump forward a few months into early 1978, to a time well documented in Mark Radcliffe's book 'Showbusiness: Diary of a Rock 'n Roll Nobody.' This is essential and frequently hilarious reading for anybody with an earthy sense of humour, particularly if they were in their late teens in the late 70s, and in possession of a love for the less sophisticated hybrids of rock 'n roll. Phil and Mark first met at University in 1976 and have remained close friends ever since.

"Don and Kev came back to Manchester at some point around January 78, I think the band only limped on for a couple more months after I left. Don ended up at the flat Mark and I rented for quite a while, he was still a skinhead which made things a bit awkward at times. He was as nice as could be because he needed us now. We started going to gigs, he still had the Chiswick contract, he wanted to get something together so he found this guy from Oldham, a sort of entertainments agent, who persuaded us to reform but with Ron on guitar and me on bass. We needed a drummer so Mark was asked and he agreed. Very quickly the agent got us a headline gig at a festival at Groningen in Holland. The week before the Vibrators had headlined and the week after it was Lindisfarne!! We 'borrowed' Grinny's drumkit out of his garage while he was away and began a week of rehearsal in a church hall in Poulton. We had a couple of guys with a big Mercedes van and a great PA to do the sound for us over in Holland. Apparently they used to be the singer and drummer out of Shabby Tiger, a 70s glam rock band. Anyway it poured down all weekend, it was badly organised, it ran late, and we

were blown away by some band from Newcastle. By the time we went on the weather was awful the sound was dire and people were drifting away. On the way back our agent was stopped at customs and we never saw him again, the main problem was he had all the money. The two lads out of Shabby Tiger were not happy, they just took us to the M6 and dropped us off at the first service station. We had to hitch back."

This line up continued for a few months gigging at a variety of places in northern England and even up to Scotland on one occasion, Dumfries I believe.

"We teamed up with Bitch who were led by ex Drones guitarist Gus Gangrene (aka Gary Callender), with Glenn Jones also on guitar, a guy called Gabby on bass, a strange peroxide girl singer called Charlie, and Martin Smith on drums. We did about a dozen gigs with them. At the Mayflower in Manchester I cut my left hand quite badly on a broken glass after fooling around with Gus/Gary backstage. There was blood everywhere, I should have been stitched really, but we were due on in 10 minutes, so I bandaged it with a towel and went on and played."

"We did a gig at Sutton in Ashfield which the so called promoter had failed to advertise and nobody turned up. He paid us in beer and we all got absolutely hammered. At the end of the night we all jammed together, Don with Glen and Gus both of Bitch on guitars, me on bass, along with the Bitch drummer. The police turned up because of the noise and asked who was driving the van, which was a good question as most of us were incapable of even standing up. They drove us and the van to the nearest lay-by outside their jurisdiction and told us to stay there until the morning. Mark and I had had enough by then and quit soon after."

Ron Hartley was dropped soon after.

"Ron's style of playing was more rooted in the blues, he was really very good, but he didn't really have the right style for the chord thrashing that was required. His influence was Clapton and Page whereas mine was Townshend and Wilko Johnson, so perhaps my style was more suited to the punk thing."

Don was still keen to carry on though, his music was no longer punk as such, more like high energy rock.

"Don ended up living at Sean McKay's student house in Salford. He decided it was time for a change again and that the music scene needed a good rock band! He rang me up and was so enthusiastic and persuasive that I went along with it. Grinny was back on drums, Kev McKay was on bass, I was on guitar and Chris Cummings also joined on guitar. I remember going round to Chris' house in Blackpool with Don, we persuaded him to quit his job and join the band! I think we did about three gigs the most memorable one being the support slot with Motorhead at King George's Hall in Blackburn. Not long into the gig Lemmy somehow broke his bass and borrowed Kev's. He practically wrecked that too, it was a sorry sight at the end, covered in deep scratches from the bullet belt he always wore. We were pretty dreadful really, the material was crap, mainly new stuff that Don had written, plus a few leftovers from earlier times, anything that could be done in a rock vein. It all fell apart very soon."

Thus ended Phil's final chapter with Skrewdriver. He has continued to play music, often in the company of long time friend and well known broadcaster Mark Radcliffe whose book documents many of Phil's post Skrewdriver musical activities.

## **Ian's letter from National Fronts' magazine "Nationalism Today" issue 25, November 1984.**

**Dear NT,**

I am writing to you in the hope that you will print my reply to a certain article by Ivan somebody or other, which was printed in a recent edition of a magazine called *Spearhead*. I checked that the magazine was not another left-wing smear mag and found that it was printed by a small group of conservatives called the British National Party. In the article it was suggested that a lot of NF Skinheads sniff glue. I have been a Skinhead for a long time and have also been involved with the NF for five years, and in that time have only met one Skinhead who associated himself with the Front who actually sniffed glue. In my opinion this is a completely disgusting habit and should be stamped out. It is also well known that most people who sniff glue are not Skinheads and are most definitely not associated with the NF.

It does, however, seem to me that the officials of the B.N.P. occasionally partake in a gluebag or two because they always seem to be suffering from double or treble vision when they describe how many people attend their meetings and marches.

Yours for the Front,

**Ian Stuart,  
Skrewdriver,  
London W.C.**

## **Interview with Ian Stuart of Skrewdriver. Blood & Honour magazine issue No.1 – 1987**

1. There have been one or two line-up changes in Skrewdriver recently, what is the band's latest line-up?

The band's line-up is now - Vocals & Guitar - Ian Stuart, Guitar - Martin Cross, Bass - Merv Shields, Drums - John Burnley

2. Eighteen months have now passed since Skrewdriver's last record release, Blood And Honour. What plans are there for new releases in the near future?

We are presently in the studios recording the White Rider L.P, and we're hoping to have that out by October. We think that there may also be a new compilation L.P. for Rock-o-Rama, and maybe a Skrewdriver E.P. on a new Nationalist record label.

3. Will the White Rider L.P. signal any changes in musical direction for the group. In what ways, if any, will it differ from Blood And Honour?

White Rider will be a hard rock L.P. in the same vein as Blood And Honour, but obviously we hope that people will consider it to be an improvement because it is every band's intention to improve as time goes by.

4. Is the outspoken political message conveyed in your previous records to be continued with White Rider?

Our political message will be the same, and will concentrate on the racial warrior ideal and centre on pride, honour, honesty and loyalty. We feel that these virtues are very important as

recently we have come across certain people who consider themselves to be political soldiers who wouldn't recognise honesty or loyalty if they came and belted them in the mouth.

5. Do you feel that Skrewdriver have an important role to play in the struggle for Nationalism in Britain?

Not so much in a one-party political role because as you know we have now left the NF.

However we will of course be working with Nationalists of any party if we consider them to be trustworthy. We do put a political message over at our concerts and anybody who picks up on that message should make up their own minds as to which Nationalist party they join.

6. Although we have just mentioned the struggle for Nationalism in Britain, to what extent are Skrewdriver supported by Nationalists in other countries?

We have a lot of support from Nationalist parties all over the White world. That's all I'm worried about because unlike certain weirdos involved in Nationalist circles, I do not consider Black to be beautiful.

7. In which countries, other than Britain, do Skrewdriver enjoy most support?

Probably Sweden, Germany, Holland and now we seem to be having a lot of comeback from the United States. We also get good support from Norway, Belgium, France, Italy, Finland, Canada, Hungary, Poland, South Africa, Austria, Bavaria and Australia.

8. We have discussed future plans regarding record releases, but what plans are there for live appearances in the near future?

There should be a big concert to launch the Blood And Honour paper, with us, Brutal Attack, No Remorse and Sudden Impact in early September. Also there should be one on the south coast later that month.

9. Finally, how healthy do you feel the skinhead movement is at the moment and are you confident about the future?

The skinhead movement is always experiencing ups and downs but the signs at the moment seem very healthy, and I hope it stays that way.

## **From Blood & Honour magazine issue No.10 - 1990**

**As the tenth issue of B & H find its way into your eager hands, we are proud to speak to Ian Stuart, the lead singer of the longest-serving White Pride band Skrewdriver. Ian also founded B & H and though he has passed the paper into other hands now, he continues to spread White Pride and patriotism amongst the White music fans throughout the world.**

B & H: Ian, after being involved in the struggle for nearly 12 years, have things improved for Racial Nationalism?

Ian S: Well I think there have been obvious gains in certain countries. Look at France and Germany and the beginnings of the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe. Most of Europe seems to be doing quite well as regards to anti-Marxist movements. The only two nations who are being left behind are U.S.A. and Britain. The reason for this as far as I am concerned is the complete control of the media by the Zionists. Also the legal system of this country is also more or less completely run by Zionists. The control of the media is an extremely powerful means with which, a large percentage of the people are force-fed exactly what the Zionists want to tell them.

B & H: Do you presently support any political party?

Ian S: At the moment we are trying to get as many people as possible from all the parties working together. At socials we invite people from the NF, the BNP, the Klan, the League of

St.George and everybody socialises and gets on. This as far as we are concerned bodes well for the future

B & H: We've had reports that you and several other bands have recently been threatened by certain so-called right-wingers.

Ian S: We did have a certain ex-Party, that used to exist a few years ago trying to pressure us into becoming part of their extremely little organisation. They also tried to gain access to our subscription lists. They were treated with the contempt they deserved and shown the door. No one gets to see our lists, and as it happens, that was quite lucky because these particular people's old membership lists have begun to appear in left-wing rags. So much for their pathetic security. As far as I'm concerned people who model themselves on passed-it gangsters have nothing in common with people who are trying to forward the White cause.

B & H: Now that you have released your second solo LP "Slay the Beast", will you be carrying on with Skrewdriver?

Ian S: Certainly. There was never any intention of giving up Skrewdriver. The thing is that I write so much material that it is a way of getting songs onto Vinyl rather than just forgetting about them. At present I have nearly completed the material for the next Skrewdriver LP which should be out by summer. At present I think it should be called "The Strong Survive". I'd say it was a little faster than the "Warlord" LP.

B & H: Are you ever bothered when the Left or State Agents such as Searchlight or Harrington slander you in their publications?

Ian S: Not really, Harrington is finished now that its come to light who he was working with. Searchlight is now going so over the top that its become more like a work of fantasy rather than a political journal. As an example, a recent Searchlight accused me of being an arms dealer, a drug peddler, an acid house party organiser, a child pornographer, plus, conspiring to murder Patrick Harrington. That was all in one issue as well. It is funny though, how Jewish people such as Gerry Gable are allowed to publish all these figments of their tormented imaginations, without fear of prosecution from the press control people. On the other hand when you discover the people who run the press and its control boards its not so funny after all.

B & H: What have been the most memorable events of 1989 for you?

Ian S: The coming down of the Berlin Wall and the inevitable reunification of the German people. I have many good comrades and friends in Germany and I am happy for them and congratulate them in their hour of victory. Also the crumbling of Marxism in Eastern Europe has been great to watch as Karl Marx's perverted doctrines have been toppled by national pride.

B & H: Anything else to add ?

Ian S: Thanks to everyone who has stuck by me and the band over the last 12 years. Keep on working for our great cause and one day we shall grasp victory. Keep strong. We will win.

## **IAN STUART interview, published originally in the English "Last Chance" skinzine 1991-1992**

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE WAY SOME PEOPLE PROJECT GARRY BUSHELL AS THE WORKING CLASS HERO AND THE VOICE OF THE STREETS ?

Its hilarious, really, because no-one that was working class and stuck for the White race would ever get a job for one of the national newspapers.

HOW DID YOU COME ABOUT THE NAME SKREWDRIVER ?

We got named Skrewdriver by the record company, because we didn't have a name at the time.

BUT WASN'T YOUR FIRST BAND CALLED THE TUMBLING DICE ?

That was just a rock band, we did a load of rock covers, so when we did a tape more punk style, we didn't have a name, so the record company came up with Skrewdriver.

SO HOW DID YOUR BAND FIRST GET PICKED UP BY THE RECORD COMPANIES ?

Well, we were playing a lot of pub gigs, doing the circuits, and then we went to see the Sex Pistols in Manchester with Buzzcocks and Slaughter & The Dogs, we really enjoyed it cos we thought that it was fresh, new sort of thing, so we did a tape more on that sort of line, sent it to a load of record companies. We got answered by a couple of companies who said that they were interested, but they would like to hear a more professional tape, because the one we sent them, we recorded in a metal factory! Chiswick asked us to come down and do a session in a studio, and we got a single deal out of that, and then once we done that single they updated the deal to two singles and an LP.

WHY WAS YOUR THIRD SINGLE "BUILT UP, KNOCKED DOWN" RECORDED IN MANCHESTER AND WHY WAS IT RELEASED ON THE INDIE LABEL TJM RECORDS ?

Well, I moved to Manchester and reformed the band for a while, actually it was with the Manchester line up that we supported Motörhead at Blackburn. We had already split from Chiswick records so we went on a local label TJM records. We played a lot of local gigs and got really good turn-outs. Then the gigs started to die down and we split up again.

SO WHY DID YOU LEAVE THE CHISWICK LABEL ?

Basically because they were leftwing and didn't like the way we wouldn't denounce the skinheads.

WHAT MADE THE IMAGE OF SKREWDRIVER CHANGE FROM PUNK TO SKINHEAD ?

Basically because we got fed up with punk turning a bit leftwing, whereas before everyone came along and had a laugh and danced about, but then it got to the stage where it became high fashion, and people would just stand there seeing who had the most drawing pins through their nose. When it got to that stage it got really silly. We had all been skinheads in the past so we all just reverted, and a lot of our mates coming to the gigs were skinheads.

IS THAT TRUE THAT YOU SUPPORTED BANDS LIKE THE POLICE AND SIOUXIE AND THE BANSHEES IN THE EARLIER DAYS ?

When we supported the Police they were just a small band and most of the people came to see Skrewdriver anyway. We also supported The Boomtown Rats, Siouxsie, The Damned, 999, loads of bigger bands. I can't remember all of them now.

CAN YOU TELL US THE STORY OF KING ROAD WITH THE PUNK VERSUS TED FIGHTS, AND THE EXPERIENCES YOU HAD ?

The worst occasion was when we were playing with the Police at the Railway Hotel in Putney, this was at the height of all of the violence between Punks and Teds. We were the last ones out of the gig and there had just been a rock and roll disco down the road, there was only about six of us left and we took a right hammering. Our drummer got his teeth knocked out and everything.

CHANGING THE SUBJECT SLIGHTLY, WHAT WAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE MADNESS FILM "TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT", ALSO CAN YOU TELL US THE STORY BEHIND THE MUCH REPORTED FRIENDSHIP WITH SUGGSY ?

Suggsy used to be the roadie for Skrewdriver back in 1978 and I went back down to London for a while and stayed at this mothers flat cos he'd moved out of his room and bought a house so I had his room. I was only there for about seven months, that was basically it, the picture was taken in his mums front room. The Madness film was done in about 1981 or something like that, anyway because I didn't have much money at the time, they just got me on the film, that's all. I got the agency fee which was about £60 or something, and that's why I was in the film.

ARE YOU STILL IN CONTACT WITH SUGGSY, WHEN IS THE LAST TIME THAT YOU HEARD FROM HIM ?

No, I'm not in contact, not since the article in the Sun newspaper, I didn't try and contact him and he didn't try and contact me, which is fair enough, he's got to make a living and if he's mixing with a nationalist he is gonna find it hard to make a living. We didn't fall out or anything like that and as far as I know we were still on good terms with eachother, I've got nothing against the bloke, he's done me a lot favours in the past. He's just trying to make a living. If he wants to make a living like that, its up to him. I've got no intention of slagging him off, and why should I ?

WHAT MADE YOU TURN THE BAND POLITICAL, AS IN THE EARLY DAYS YOU KEPT OUT OF POLITICS, DID YOU JUST GET UP ONE MORNING AND SAY "OH F\*CK IT", AND WENT FOR IT, OR WAS IT A GRADUAL CHANGE ?

I wasn't really political at all to be honest, I didn't like blacks, because I'd never seen one till I went down London, and there I met lots, and they all seemed to have a chip on their shoulder, I didn't like the lefties funny enough, because they all reminded me of student being all anti-British and that put me off them. Most of our mates that came to our gigs were political, they were either NF (National Front – Club28 addition) or BM (British Movement – Club28 addition) and in the end what happened was the press ordered us along with Sham 69 to denounce those people in the audience, or get banned. We refused and Sham 69 said OK. So Sham 69 became very big and we got banned from everywhere, they banned all of our adverts from the music papers and everything. All this was in 1977.

ARE YOU STILL IN TOUCH WITH ANY OF THE ORIGINAL MEMBERS AT ALL?

Yeah, I went back to Blackpool a couple of months back and bumped into the old guitarist and drummer. They still know that Skrewdriver are still going, and the drummer still buys the records. They're good blokes and are doing quite well for themselves now. Ron's a bit of an alcoholic, good guitarist though. He's on the front cover of the All Skrewed Up LP although he didn't actually play on it. Our original guitarist Phil actually played on the LP.

WHAT IS YOUR ALL TIME FAVOURITE SONG, OUT OF THE HUNDREDS THAT YOU HAVE DONE ?

Well, it changes from time to time, you go off songs. I've always liked "I Can See The Fire", on the "White Rider" LP. I keep thinking about playing it live, but I think that it might be a little bit too slow for a gig. Another one of my favourite songs that we have done more recently is "Freedom What Freedom", not the Skrewdriver version but the one on the latest Klansmen LP. At the moment, they're the main ones.

WHAT ABOUT THE OLDER SONGS, DO YOU STILL LIKE LISTENING TO THEM ?

I like "Tomorrow Belongs To Me", I've gone off the tunes a little bit, I've been playing them for such a long time, I like the lyrics especially, I think that they're brilliant lyrics. Obviously "White Power", "Free My Land", I've played them so many times that I don't really listen to them at home anymore.

IS THERE ANY SONGS THAT YOU WISHED YOU HAD WRITTEN, WHEN YOU HEARD THEM BY SOMEONE ELSE ?

Yes, I would like to have written "England" by the Angelic Upstarts, I can't believe that Mensi wrote it as he is such a left wing prat. He used to be nationalist until he realized that he could make more money being a leftwing. (Ian then proceeded to amuse us with some stories he's heard about Mensi).

IS THERE ANY GIGS OUT OF THE HUNDREDS THAT YOU'VE PLAYED THAT STICK IN YOUR MIND AS THE BEST, WORST ?

Well, we played the Vortex twice, they were quite good. It was the first time that a lot of skinheads turned up, one of those was with Siouxsie And The Banshees. We played two or three gigs at the Roxy and broke the house records, we had the most people there, they were brilliant gigs. And then, what turned out to be the main event, but got called off, but we managed to squeeze about six or seven hundred people in a two hundred seated pub, now that was a good gig basically due to the satisfaction of getting something on, despite the fact that everything was stacked against us. To me now, any gig that goes ahead is a good gig because it's such a battle to get a gig on that when we do it, it's great. Another good gig was the one in Newcastle a couple of years ago where there were six bands playing. We've also recently played in Italy and that was a brilliant gig, really well organized.



YOU LIVED IN LONDON FOR QUITE A FEW YEARS, BUT WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE ?

Basically because it was getting that there wasn't very many places to drink where everybody can mix. It got to the stage where the leftwing followed me around every pub I went to. They tried to get me banned from my cafe by picketing, but the cafe wouldn't ban me, although the pubs were different. I used to go into a pub and I'd only be drinking there for about a week and then the reds would start to hassle the landlord and then picket the pub, so obviously I got banned. All this was happening, and also the fact that there was literally nowhere where we could meet and have a drink. Also everytime there was a leftwing march in London, they used to visit my house, plus I was getting demonstrations outside of my house every three to four weeks. The police always informed me that if I came out of my house while they were there I would be nicked for inciting them to cause violence. But the main reason for leaving London was because the police harassment. One day, a load of BNP supporters were attacked by IRA supporters. The police arrived on the scene and took all of the BNP supporters' names and numbers, they went around to their houses later on and asked them if they would testify in court to get their attackers charged. The only problem was that the police had made a mistake and thought that they were the IRA supporters. I was tipped off by these BNP people that they should say they saw me causing all of the trouble. Basically, if they hadn't got the IRA and the BNP muddled up they might have got away with the frame up. It was the same when a gay got stabbed a few years ago at Kings Cross. I had nothing to do with the stabbing, I was around the corner when it was supposed to have happened. But I was still slammed in Wormwood Scrubs for two and half months until they decided that they hadn't got any evidence. So I thought that if this is what's gonna happen every time anything happens in London and I'm gonna get stitched up for things, I mean, it was time to go. I wasn't too bothered about the commies because they were arseholes, it's when the police started to try to stitch me up. There's not a great deal that you can do.

YOU WERE ACTUALLY IN PRISON SERVING A TWELVE MONTH SENTENCE, WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND THAT ?

Well, we were attacked by a mob of blacks after Searchlight had been giving out leaflets with my face, my address, where I drink on them, we used to get trouble most weekends from gangs of blacks going past my house on the way home from collage, and one particular night we got attacked by about eight or nine of them, we fought back, the police arrived and we got arrested. The blacks didn't even turn up at court for three days in a row and the police had to go out and bring them to the court. Searchlight has tried to smear me on several occasions, I've been called several things in their pages, child pornographer, arms dealer, conspiring to murder Patrick Harrington (one time National Front/White Noise frontman – Club28 addition), a drug pusher and an acid house party organiser. I've even been accused of printing Swedish nationalist magazines. God knows where I keep this printing press, under my bed probably! I can't even understand one word of Swedish! I must be a busy man!

YOU ARE THE FOUNDER OF BLOOD AND HONOUR, DO YOU THINK THAT IT HAS BEEN A SUCCESS AND WHAT DO YOU SEE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED BY BLOOD AND HONOUR ?

Blood And Honour has took off so well because of its idea. There has been no other magazine that promotes the advancement of the White race and that does not tie itself to any political party. B&H is not tied to any party, it is mainly run by the bands. The bands are popular so the magazine is popular. Its main achievement has been to get more people involved in the

White cause and to push the music of the bands over to a lot more people than would be possible otherwise. Food for thought, that Blood And Honour has got at least five times the circulation of Searchlight. That's a fact.

WHAT ADVISE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ANYONE OUT THERE THAT IS THINKING OF STARTING A NATIONALIST BAND?

Don't start unless you're willing to accept a hell of a lot harassment and a lot of hard work to get anywhere. You've got to be very dedicated to do it. If you want to make money, just forget it, sing like Englebert Humperdink or get interviewed by Terry Wogan.

HAS THE RECENT PROBLEMS WITH SKREWDRIVER IN GERMANY DETERRED YOU FROM PLAYING THERE AGAIN ?

I don't know about the rest of the band but me personally, it made me want to go out there and cause a lot more trouble. The way that I see it is that Skrewdriver are being made scapegoats for the fact that the German government have brought too many immigrants into the country. So if we have had anything to do with waking German feeling up, all the better for it. Although I do not think it has got anything to do with us. It's just the German people rising against the influx of immigrants and I wish that the British people would do the same.

DO YOU THINK THAT PERHAPS SKREWDRIVER WAS THE CATALYST FOR ALL OF THE TROUBLE IN GERMANY ?

No, not at all, it started before we played over there, I think that it may have been aggravated a little bit by the fact that the police kept them all in prison, obviously I was still out which was a bad mistake on the police's side. Cos I was able to go to the gig and tell everybody what had happened, and after the gig obviously there was some trouble with the police.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO SING ONE SONG IN GERMAN ON YOUR LATEST LP ?  
("Stolz" on "Freedom what freedom" album – Club28 addition)

Basically, we sell more records in Germany than anywhere else. As the Germans support us and give us so much support, I thought that it was about time we done something in German for them. I wrote the song in English, I got a German lad to translate it, put it on a tape for me so I could hear the accents and pronunciations and done it from that. Also Germany has probably got the biggest growing skinhead scene in Europe, and German people have stood by the band almost as long as the English have. We've been on a German record label since 1982. It's a lot easier for Germans to obtain our records in Germany too, a lot of normal record shops stock them, and even if they don't, people can order them through the record shops. They're not banned over there, as a matter of fact they are not actually banned over here either, the newspapers say that they are, so all the shops won't stock them. We can't really win either way. Axel Rose from "Guns and Roses" can get away with saying that naughty N word, because he's a druggie and has got a black in the band, but I can't risk saying that N word, unless of course I smoke a joint at gigs and get a rasta bass player, then it's ok. That's how fucked up and hypocritical everything is.

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE TROUBLE YOU HAVE HAD RECENTLY WITH THE POLICE IN YOUR AREA ?

Well basically all that is, we were doing regular gigs around here, getting increasing audiences, getting a lot of locals interested, so the police firstly tried to stop the gigs, which they managed up to a certain extent by threatening the governors of the pubs with their licences. Then we were rehearsing at a pub at dinner times, and people used to come in on their dinner break to watch, so the police spoke to the governor of the pub and said that they are allowed to rehearse but they must shut the doors because no-one is allowed to listen to them. Then after a while of rehearsing behind closed doors they decided that we wouldn't do it any more, and then more recently they have tried to stop me and a friend from even drinking in the pubs, but they didn't really get away with that, and we, due to the governors sticking up for us, the police have let that one drop for the moment, so we are not banned from drinking anywhere yet.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO RECORD UNDER KLANSMEN, IAN STUART AND WHITE DIAMOND, RATHER THAN USE THIS MATERIAL FOR SKREWDRIVER ?

The fact is that I just write so many different songs and they just wouldn't be used otherwise. Plus the fact that the Klansmen songs are in more of a Rock and Roll vein and wouldn't really suit Skrewdriver. Also with the Klansmen it has brought in a lot of rockabilies into the Blood & Honour movement, which is a good thing. Hopefully the White Diamond will do the same thing with a few bikers. Basically we are just spreading our wings and trying to appeal to everybody, not just skinheads.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE RESPONSE TO THE WHITE DIAMOND LP ?

Well, it hasn't been out that long, but the people that I have spoken to about it seem to like it. As far as I'm concerned the guitar could have been a little bit louder and the vocals a little quieter. The original mix of it, the guitar was too loud and you couldn't hear the vocals, so we took it back to be remixed and it went the other way around.

IS THERE GOING TO BE ANOTHER WHITE DIAMOND LP ?

Oh yeah, definitely.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS FOR THE KLANSMEN TO PLAY LIVE ?

I haven't got any plans at the moment, but we could well do one day. There's been plenty of people asking if we would. We have had several requests from Germany for the Klansmen to play over there. We normally do a couple of Klansmen songs at most Skrewdriver gigs anyway. The Klansmen haven't actually been a steady line up anyway, we tend to use musicians from other bands. It's good for them, as they get to record, which a lot of bands don't manage to do, and it also gets more people involved in our cause. The first LP we used musicians from Demented Are Go, the second was with The Krewmen and the third was from some local rock band from around this area.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO PEOPLE WHO ARE JUST GETTING INTO NATIONALISM, BUT ARE PUZZLED BY THE WAY THAT THE AUTHORITIES ARE

### HARASSING THEM ?

I think that you've got to expect it, it's the way that the people above run things. You've got to be very dedicated to become a nationalist. It is better to educate people at a younger age, some of the old parties used to leaflet schools. We must use every way that we can to get our message across, through music, leafleting houses, town centres, postering, we must use every way we can. The odds are against us, but it is important.

### WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON RELIGION ?

I don't really believe in it, I don't go to church or anything. I think that my religion is my race. I've got nothing against Christians or Odinists, but I think that Christianity is being pushed into being very weak at the moment. I've lost a lot of respect for the Christians, but hopefully they'll rise up one day and become powerful as they once were. I agree with all of the Norse God mythology, and there is something in it, but personally I'm just fighting for my race and I'll work with all of these people so long as they've got the same views as I have.

### WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE UNITY MOVEMENT AND THE RAVEN ?

Well I haven't even seen the Raven at all yet so I can't really comment on that, but I presume, going by the name that it's an Odinist thing. Unity, when it first came out I wasn't so sure that it was a good thing because I thought that it might be distracting from Blood & Honour a little bit, but when it got off the ground, it was good. It worked alongside Blood & Honour. It's a good thing to have different organizations all working together, as long as there is no rivalry. Kev Turner is a dedicated man, he's been in jail a lot of times, but he has never even considered giving it all up. He's doing a great job up there and has quite a lot of influence.

### WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE IMPRISONMENT OF TWO PEOPLE FOR BASICALLY SELLING SKREWDRIVER MERCHANDISE ?

Well, it's just unbelievable, being put away just for selling records. As far as I'm concerned and as far as anybody I know is concerned, there has never been anything to say that you can't sell records, whatever they were. I mean, there's bands going around singing songs about killing God and loads of these anti-religion groups, they've all got a bit of stick, but there has never actually been any courtcases trying to stop them selling records. Take American rapper Ice T, some stores said that they wouldn't stock it, but most stores do still stock it. It was all a publicity stunt and has sold more records because of it. He's never been charged. Obviously there is nothing wrong in singing about killing White people and police. No-one was ever done by the law for selling Ice T records, and no-one has ever been arrested either. Our records do not incite violence at all, our lyrics are basically about being proud of your White race. If it's illegal to be proud of your race, why isn't it illegal to be proud to be Black, Asian etc...?

### WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON WATERLOO (Skrewdriver's comeback gig in London 1992 – Club28 addition), AND IN PARTICULAR THE MASSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE THAT IT ACHIEVED ?

I except the sort of coverage that we got. It's obvious that you're never going to get anything good said about you. It would have been nicer if a lot of the lads that came over from abroad actually got to the gig. It made it a lot more awkward having so much publicity about it in advance. But in the end the gig went ahead, it was a good gig, everybody that made it there enjoyed it. So basically it was a victory. But then again, I do think that it was a bit of a shame

that the police acted illegally again by shutting down a main line train station, to try and stop people getting to the concert. They shouldn't have allowed a leftwing demonstration at the station on the day because it was pretty obvious that they were only there to cause trouble. The police knew that was the case but they never banned it. If the NF ever want to march, the police ban it straight away because of the trouble it would cause. It's the same with the recent Bloody Sunday IRA march, the IRA who kill British people were allowed to march while the police did all they can to stop the people against the march by arresting 378 people. It seems that to be proud to be British is a crime.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE THE LAST TIME WE SPOKE ?

We've played loads of gigs. We've got a new Skrewdriver LP written, we should be going in to record within the next six to seven weeks. That should be out in 3 or 4 months then. Same applies to the new Klansmen LP. White Diamond and Patriotic Ballads LP's should be coming out within the next few weeks. The White Diamond LP is called "The Power And The Glory", the Patriotic Ballads is called "Patriotic Ballads II Our Time Will Come". I'm not too sure what the Skrewdriver LP will be called. The Klansmen LP will be taking the theme of the American civil war, although I'm not too sure exactly what it'll be called.

CHANGING THE SUBJECT SOMEWHAT, ARE YOU A FOOTBALL FAN ?

I used to play football when I was younger. I don't really want to go into football at all. If I ever said that I supported a team, I think that you'll find that could cause problems. Football is a very popular and passionate subject to many people. I've got to admit that I've never supported a team seriously, but my favourite footballer is George Best. I watch it now and again, but not a lot. I used to prefer playing it to watching it.

DO YOU PARTICIPATE OR WATCH ANY OTHER SPORTS ?

Not particularly. Boxing is quite good. Rocky Marciano was my favourite boxer, he was a European that beat everybody in the world and always could have done. Alan Minter was good, I liked him until he got beat by Marvin Hagler, and then I went off him.

YOU'VE RECENTLY GOT A FEW MORE TATTOOS, AFTER BEING SO LONG WITH THE TWO, TELL US A BIT ABOUT THEM ?

I don't like being lop-sided, so I make sure that I've got one on each side. Every time that I have one I have to get another one on the other side. I'll have a couple more on the back of my arms and that'll be it. I won't get them sleeved. I wouldn't like to say who does mine, in case he got attacked. Let's just say that it's a biker from the Midlands. Every single tattoo I've got is of a political subject.

WHAT SORT OF READING MATERIAL ARE YOU INTO ?

Since I've been in prison I don't read anything, all I did in prison was read books and listen to the radio and that's put me off. I used to read a lot of books at one time. If I want to read a newspaper, I read, would you believe, The Sun, they are the ones who done a full page story on me the last time I was in prison. The only reason I read the the Sun is because I do the

crossword and because it's not labour. But I don't really take any of what's in it seriously, it's as much crap as the others. In the past I've read a lot of David Irvings books, they're very good, but I reckon that my favourite author has got to be Tolkien, The Lord Of The Rings is the best book that I've ever read. I've read it over ten times.

WHAT ABOUT THE FANTASY BOOK THAT YOU ONCE WROTE ?

I've lent it to so many different people that I can't get it back, so I can't write it out again. Unless I re-wrote it all, but I can't even remember most of it. It was basically a fantasy story about a land that was being invaded, all of the tribes fought against each other, but in the end they all united to fight the invaders. I was hoping to publish it one day, but I lent it out to so many people that I've lost track of where it is. We could even have done a concept LP to go with it. The book was called The New Dawn.

TELL US YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THE SUBJECT OF NICKY CRANE, ONCE A CLOSE FRIEND, AND THEN TURNED OUT TO BE A GAY.

I feel more betrayed by him than probably anybody else, because he was the head of our security. I actually used to stick up for him when people used to say that he was a queer, because he convinced me that he wasn't. I always used to ask him why he worked at these gay clubs, telling him that he'd get a bad name. He used to say that it was the security firm that he used to work with, that they used to give him the jobs there. I accepted him at face value, as he was a nationalist. I was fooled the same as everybody else. Perhaps more than everybody else. I felt I was betrayed by him and I want nothing to do with him whatsoever. He's dug his own grave as far as I'm concerned. He has actually been in touch with me after the program was aired, he wanted to assure me that he wouldn't sell out the nationalist cause, which I wouldn't expect him to do anyway, considering that he went through so many things for nationalism. It's a big shame that he turned out to be a homosexual because he could have been a good nationalist. It just goes to show that nationalism and homosexuality do not fit in together, because Nationalism is a true cause and homosexuality is a perversion. Nicky Crane left, and I think that it was the best thing he could have done, but he should have left a hell of a lot earlier. He was living a lie for all of them years. I've got no respect for the bloke anymore. (Bottomboy Crane died of an aids related disease in december 1993 Rot in peace – Club28 addition)

WHAT CAN YOU ENVISION YOURSELF DOING IN 5 OR 10 YEARS TIME ?

Probably being in prison. They're bringing in so many new laws in this country. Or dead !

IF IT CAME TO THE CRUNCH, AND THE LAWS WERE REALLY STRICT, WHAT WOULD YOU DO, WOULD YOU CHANGE ALL OF YOUR LYRICS, OR CARRY ON REGARDLESS ?

I would probably change all of the lyrics. Change them completely. In the end I'd probably do songs about white rats and black rats, and see if they can change things about that. I mean, where is all this going to end ? Alright you can sing about the dove and the crow, so the dove's going to have to win a fight in the end instead of being the bird of peace. In the end it's going to get to the stage where you're going to have to sing like that to get a song out. Everyone's still going to know what you mean. They're making it so pathetic now.

SO WHAT WILL STOP YOU CARRYING ON ?

Either put me in prison or kill me, there's no other way that I'm going to give up.

IF THERE WAS ANYTHING THAT YOU'VE DONE IN THE PAST THAT YOU COULD CHANGE NOW, WHAT WOULD THAT BE ?

Nothing, there's nothing that I would have changed, nothing at all. Obviously I would like to have made a lot of money and been on Top Of The Pops and all that, what other person who's been in a band wouldn't ? But I'm singing the wrong sort of lyrics aren't I ? I would never changed my songs just for the fame, though. There has never been any major thing that I regret, maybe a few minor things, nothing to do with politics though, except I should have joined this and I shouldn't have joined that.

RUMOURS ARE RIFE THAT YOU ARE GOING TO MOVE OVER TO GERMANY TO LIVE, IS THERE ANY TRUTH IN THAT ?

No, that's a load of rubbish. It's not even crossed my mind. I like Germany though.

IF IT CAME TO A STAGE WHERE YOU HAD TO MOVE OUT OF ENGLAND, WHICH COUNTRY WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO LIVE IN ?

It'd have to be a country where you wouldn't get so much hassle being a nationalist, and I think that at the moment Germany is far from that. I'd probably go somewhere like Antwerp in Belgium. It's a nice city, there is a hell of a lot of Vlaams Blok MPs in the Antwerp city itself. It's probably the most right wing city in Europe at the moment.

YOU ARE QUITE A WELL TRAVELLED MAN BECAUSE OF MANY EUROPEAN GIGS WITH SKREWDRIVER, WHERE ARE YOUR FAVOURITE PLACES ?

I loved Sweden, the country is brilliant. Germany is brilliant.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE BAND AT THE MOMENT ?

Manowar, I change my opinion now again. But it's them at the moment. I have always liked the Rolling Stones, I like the Almighty, they're quite a new band. AC/DC I've always liked.

CHANGING THE SUBJECT ONCE AGAIN, BACK IN THE 1977 DAYS, SKREWDRIVER SOUND WAS VERY DIFFERENT TO NOW. WHAT WERE YOUR INFLUENCES BACK THEN ?

I had a lot of favourite bands before the punk bands came along. I saw the Sex Pistols' first gig in the north in Manchester. I thought they were brilliant. But we still weren't influenced by them, Skrewdriver were at that time still called Tumbling Dice and we used to cover Who, Rolling Stones, Zeppelin, Deep Purple and all of the rock type numbers. Then we started to play the punkier stuff. I couldn't play guitar at that time so our guitarist wrote most of the songs. I started to learn to play guitar about then, obviously you get better as you go along.

SUGGSY WAS YOUR ROADIE BACK IN 1978, I KNOW YOU DON'T KEEP IN TOUCH, BUT DID YOU WATCH THE MASSIVE MADNESS COMEBACK GIG ON TELL OVER CHRISTMAS ?

No, I'm not interested. I think that they're a crap band. I can't stand that sort of music. I like heavy rock music. Madness were the best of those type of bands, they were the only White one, and a lot of their fans were rightwing. They chose to sell out for money. We never did that. It was the same with Sham 69. I remember seeing Sham 69 playing to 7 people down the Roxy, I enjoyed them, they were great. Now Jimmy Pursey hangs around with Rastas and all sorts. He's totally gone in the head. He's never been a great singer, he had a bit of a stage presence cos people identified with him. The thing about all that is that I saw Jimmy Pursey turn up at gigs wearing baseball boots, change into DMs for the gig, then change back into baseball boots after the gig. The geezer has never been a skinhead, he sings about it but he's never been one. There was only one skinhead in that band ever, and that was their first bass player, Alby. He was the only skinhead that's ever been in Sham 69.

YOU PLAYED WITH A LOT OF BANDS THAT BECAME BIG NAMES, WERE YOU EVER GOOD FRIENDS WITH THESE NOW BIG NAMES ?

We played with Motörhead, this was a lot later, they were really decent blokes. We would always have a drink with the other bands' members if we were at one of their gigs. We often had drinks with Jimmy Pursey and the likes. One person that we were very good mates with was Stick Smith, he was in a band called Shag Nasty, who used to support us all of the time. I used to let them support us mainly because their guitarist looked like Keith Richards! Anyway, he went on to play for X-Ray Spex, we had a few arguments about it, but he was a decent sort of bloke. When we played with the Police we had a drink and chat with Sting, they borrowed our P.A at that gig. The Damned were really good blokes, we supported them a lot.

MUSICALLY, WOULD YOU CONSIDER THE 1977 DAYS TO BE BETTER AS FAR AS THE ATMOSPHERE WAS CONCERNED ?

When Punk started in London it was great atmosphere. It was a new thing, it was shit hot. We used to go to a club every night, get in free because we were in a band. It was really a good time to be there. We didn't get hardly any hassle except perhaps a little bit of the teds. I used to get on with most of the teds anyway, especially when we turned skinhead, when we were punks they used to hate us, though.

YOU'VE DONE A LOT OF COVER VERSIONS IN THE PAST, WHAT MAKES YOU DECIDE TO DO A COVER VERSION, IS IT THE GROUP, THE LYRICS OR THE TUNE?

All of those. I wouldn't do a cover version from a band that I didn't like. Obviously the lyrics mean a lot but I do normally change them slightly to go with what I'm singing about. We've thought about doing an LP with all cover versions from nationalist bands songs, we were going to do Brutal Attacks "Ocean Of Warriors" and "For You" by Public Enemy, amongst others, but nothing's ever came of it, I'd like to do something like that one day, though.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT BRUTAL ATTACK REFORMING ?

The more nationalist bands the better, they were always a good band, they were always



popular. If they get back together that's great, it's an extra band. Ken is a good frontman, and now they're going to be an additional band to the Blood & Honour circuit.

IT'S BEEN SAID THAT YOU PERSONALLY ARE PROBABLY ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL SKINHEADS IN THE WORLD, PERHAPS MORE SO ABROAD, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT ?

I think that it's because Skrewdriver have been going since 1977. We are the longest running skinhead band. I never really think about it to be honest. Sometimes it seems like that abroad, when there are hundreds of skinheads queuing up to speak to me, because they've heard about things I've done, and they've got all of your records. It mainly brings out to me how important the whole movement really is.

TELL US ABOUT SKREWDRIVER. I'M SURE THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE LOST TOUCH WITH WHO'S IN THE BAND NOW.

Stigger is the guitarist, he's been in for quite a while now, he's recorded both of the Patriotic Ballads albums, he's also played guitar on The Strong Survive, and my last solo LP Patriot. Sickly John came from Lionheart and he's been on bass since The Strong Survive. We've got a new drummer now, Mushy, he used to play for punk band Resistance 77.

WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER TO THE PEOPLE WHO SAY THAT YOU ARE ONLY IN IT FOR THE MONEY ?

If I didn't believe in what I believe in I would go to the newspapers and deny all of the stuff they put in about me. I could just as easily get out of it. If I went to the press and told them that I've changed my ways I could be on top of the pops. I could make a hell of a lot of money that way. If I was only in it for the money I wouldn't be as dedicated as I am to the nationalist cause. I would have sold out years ago.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE BRITISH ROYAL FAMILY ?

I've always thought that the Royal family should be kept as a British tradition, and I never think that they should ever have had a political voice. They're a hell of a tourist business, they've always been a British tradition. I never think that we should get rid of the Royal family. It's something that people always think about when they think of Britain. They think of the Royal Family when they hear about Britain. It seems to me that most of the people that want to destroy the Royal family are either Irish or commies. I don't want to destroy them, but I wouldn't let people like Prince Charles be telling the people what they ought to do. My personal opinion is that it would be better to have Prince Andrew as the King rather than Prince Charles. At least Prince Andrew fought for his country. We should get rid of a lot of the cling-ons. I feel strongly that we can't get rid of the Royal Family. It's always been something special about Britain.

WHEN YOU WERE AT SCHOOL, YOU OBVIOUSLY NEVER EVEN IMAGINED HOW YOU'D END UP, WHAT WERE YOUR AMBITIONS, WHAT SORT OF CAREER WERE YOU TRAINING FOR ?

When I first left school I was an apprentice coach trimmer, I left that because it was boring. After that I was a car washer, then I was a civil servant. I worked as a clerical assistant at the Premium Bonds. I left there after a couple of years and that's when I went to London. I've got a couple of O Levels and that's about it. The first band, Tumbling Dice, started about a year

after I left school.

**DID YOU EVER IMAGINE AT THAT TIME THAT YOU'D BE STILL DOING IT NOW ?**

I didn't expect to be still doing it now, although I'm very glad that I am. I think that if I'd been just playing music like when we first got the contract, I don't think we would have been doing it now. It was only when I became politically aware that's really kept me going. Bands like Sham 69 who toed the line, basically ran out of things to sing about. But we can sing about normal life and politics, and the way that affects us. That's probably why we're still going. Plus the fact that they're so hard to stop us, that makes me think, well, fuck them.

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU BEING A SKINHEAD ?**

Although it's a bit of a cliché, it is a way of life. I don't actually go around saying to myself "I'm a skinhead". But I've been one since 1977, and before that I was one the first time around in 1971 when I was at school. I do believe in what the rightwing skinheads have got to say, and on and off due to various reasons, since 1977, I've been one. But that doesn't mean to say that everyone who comes to our gigs has to be one. We get a complete mixed audience.

**DO YOU HAVE ANY REGRETS ?**

No, not really, although I didn't like being in jail much. But that wouldn't stop me defending myself from a gang of blacks again if I had to. But no, I've no real regrets.

## **IAN STUART interview from Polish "Odlam Skiny" skinzine 1992**

**1. Some words about yourself ?**

1: At the moment I am working on a lot of new ideas and new records, which is taking up a lot of time. We are only doing a few big gigs so we can work more on records for a few months, as the band has only just got out of prison in Germany, we have a lot of catching up to do.

**2. Your relation to Skinhead movement ?**

2: I think the Skinhead movement is at it's best for a long time, all over the White world Skinheads and the White youth are fighting for their Race and National Socialism is growing and on the move. Skinheads need to unite and make more contact with others in Europe and forget about what team you support or what area you come from as we must fight as one.

**3. What bands are you listening often to ?**

3: I listen to a lot of bands, political and non-political rock bands, I don't speak any other language so it is mainly English singing bands eg. No Remorse, Manowar, Motörhead, Squadron and Battle Zone.

**4. On "Blood & Honour" record was a number "Poland". What influenced you to write it ?**

4: We done "Poland" to let the people know about some of the evil things that the commies

were doing to the Polish people, and to let the people of Poland know, that some people are supporting the fight against the reds, and will keep on fighting until the red beast is dead.

**5. Some words about a new Skrewdriver record ?**

5: Skrewdriver has a lot of new records coming out, the newest being "Freedom, What Freedom", it is mostly about the freedom of speech in England / Europe and how we never get any.

**6. Your opinions about changes in East Europe ?**

6: East Europe is changing very fast, but this may be too fast as the people are not used to change. I think the Nationalist movement in the East is getting stronger but so is the antinazi group and jews. So we must be careful of the snake with two heads: communism and capitalism. Capitalism is as bad as communism, but saying this, there are a lot of good hard fighting Nationalists willing not to let it take over.

**7. You are playing in some bands - which are you holding dear ?**

7: I play in a few bands because I write so much material with different styles, I play in "The Klansmen", "White Diamond", "Skrewdriver" and also solo "Ian Stuart and Rough Justice" are all political in their own style. I still enjoy playing in Skrewdriver the best and think I always will.

**8. What do you think about Polish Skinheads stage ?**

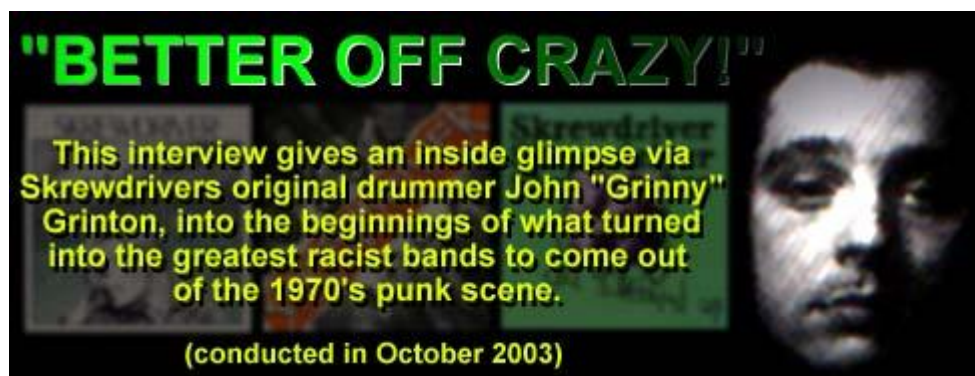
8: Poland has gone through a lot in a very few years, we in Skrewdriver respect the Skinheads in Poland for fighting for their land and wish them all the luck in the world.

**9. Plans for the future ?**

9: Our plans for the future are to play to our fans as much as we can in more counties around the White world and to carry on the fight for White Power.

**10. Final words ?**

10: Thanks for giving me time to speak to the Polish White Youth. Keep on fighting for what you believe in and never stop fighting for our one dream...WHITE POWER!



**1: Here's a question you must get tired of. How did you get your nickname? Do people still use it?**

1: My nickname "Grinny" comes from my surname, Grinton. I have been called Grinny for as long as I can remember, and yes people still call me that all the time.

2: Was the first band you were in "Warlock" (a teenage rock band Grinny was in just prior to Tumbling Dice who became Skrewdriver) or did you play music before then?

2: The first actual band I played in was Warlock. But before that I played at hotel, clubs and pubs, usually with just a keyboard player. We would usually play the popular tunes of the day and old stuff like waltzes and quicksteps. This obviously was not the thing I wanted to do, but it paid well and gave me experience.

3: How did Tumbling Dice come to exist? I heard you had a deal with Chiswick under this name but it fell through before the band could record anything.

3: Tumbling Dice came out of the remains of Warlock, while Warlock were playing. Ian had asked me to ask Phil Walmsley, the Warlock guitarist, if he would teach him guitar. So Phil was teaching Ian, who was writing songs at the time. Ian in turn got Kev and Sean McKay, twins who had been friends for years, to learn guitar. They were both good pianists and picked up guitar quite quickly.

When Warlock split up in 1975 it was logical for Ian to ask if me and Phil would join him, Kev and Sean to make a band. We agreed and started to rehearse at Ian's Dad's factory every Saturday and Sunday afternoon. Tumbling Dice did get a chance to record with Chiswick. I continued to play with in Tumbling Dice for about seven months then I had a break up with a girlfriend and hit the bottle, which ended up with me getting sacked and being replaced by a guy named Steve Gaulter. I went back to occasional gigs with Warlock, with a new guitarist, Huw Melt.

Ian continued working hard for Tumbling Dice, rehearsing, sending tapes to record company's etc. He got them regular gigs on the Northern circuit with an agency. Finally, great joy, the chance of a record deal with Chiswick. Ian got the band together and proudly told them they had a record deal with Chiswick and would have to move to London. When the band heard this Sean said "I'm not moving to London, I'm going to University". Then Steve said he would not move because he had a job and a girlfriend. Ian went mad and broke up the band. Not much point having a band that does not want to leave home. Ian came round to my house the next day and said "Them wankers had a record deal would not move to London so I have broke up the band". Then he said to me "You would have gone, wouldn't you?" and I said "Yes, course I would".



4: Where did you know the rest of the band from, as you didn't go to Baines Grammar with them?

4: I knew Ian from the age of one since he was my next door neighbor. I knew Kev from the age of six as we all went to the local Carleton C of E primary school (pre-eleven years). At eleven you took an exam the eleven plus. If you passed you went to the local grammar school "Baines". If you failed, as I did, you went to the Hodgson High School, which was mixed. They were both in the town of Poulton-le-Fylde, about a mile and a half apart. So most of the

pupils at the schools knew each other. I met Phil when I was about thirteen when we played football against each other.

**5: Is it true the band had no name when you sent your punk demo to Chiswick and that the label named you?**

5: We didn't have a name when we sent the demo. I'm not too sure if we had a name when we played our first gig as a punk band at Manchester Polytechnic in January '77 supporting LITTLE BOB STORY, another Chiswick band from France. I think we got the name off a list of possibles that Chiswick supplied. The boss of Chiswick, Ted Carroll, wanted to call us "The Nervous Wrecks". We didn't like that, but we settled on Skrewdriver.

**6: Was the band a "democratic" organization or as frontman did Ian have the most say?**

6: Ian, as leader, had almost all the say. There are many stories of things photographers, producers and managers wanted us to do but...Ian would not do some of them all down to cool and street cred. Ian could most certainly be stubborn when he wanted to be.



**7: Do you recall your first few gigs as Skrewdriver?**

7: Yes, I remember the first gigs. The first, as I said, was at Manchester Polytechnic. The first gig in London was at The Roxy in about March of '77, supporting JOHNNY MOPED. I remember this gig well. The day before the gig on a Friday I was at work as a sheetmetal worker, when I cut my hand on a piece of metal. I had to go to the hospital and had four stitches put in the wound, which was across the palm of my right hand. As soon as I got home Ian came running round and said: "Shit, what have you done to your hand?" I told him I'd cut it. He said: "We've got a gig tomorrow at The Roxy". I said: "Don't worry, I'll tape it up". So we hired a van, loaded it with equipment and off we went to London in good spirits. Trouble was, when we got to about 40 mph the drive shaft on the van started squeaking loudly so it drove us mad all the way there.

The gig went well and I got my minute of fame by getting my picture in New Musical Express. The picture was taken in the grotty dressing room with me all sweaty and the drumstick taped into my hand. The picture had the headline "Whose Skrewing you, John?"

**8: Famously, some Teds attacked you guys after a gig and you lost some teeth. Did you ever get revenge? Was the Punk vs. Ted rivalry as bad as some people say it was?**

8: Yes, we had a punch up with the Teds after a gig at the "Railway" in Putney. We were support to THE POLICE before they were famous, Sting etcetera, not the law. All night at the gig people were talking about the Teds coming down from a nearby Ted gig featuring SHAKING STEVEN & THE SUNSETS. Near the end of the night punks and THE POLICE began to disappear rather quickly. We hung about packing away gear. We started loading the van up when we heard this noise, I looked up and there was this gang of about twenty Teds coming towards us shouting, "Get the bastards!"

I was at the back of the van, outside it with the back doors open. I thought, well, I'm not going to run as I grabbed a cymbal stand and decided to battle it out. I saw one Ted approach and I swung the stand at him.

I caught him somewhere high on the arm. But next thing I knew I was surrounded by Teds, one of them picked up a mic stand--It was one of those heavy ones with the cast iron feet--and wham! Straight in the mouth. I saw flashes and stars and ended on the floor in the middle of the road. My head was spinning and everything was going in and out of focus. I could not pick myself up. Next thing I remember was Police and Ambulance men picking me up and putting me in an ambulance. I was taken to Queen Mary Hospital in Roehampton where I had 36 stitches put in my mouth. Two of my teeth had been knocked straight out, never to be found again. Revenge came quickly, though not from me. I was patched up and leaving the hospital with Effie, our manager at the time, when I saw a Teddy Boy coming in on a stretcher with facial wounds. Apparently, after I had been taken to the hospital, the band all got back in the van, minus it's windows. Kev was driving, Ian was next to him in front, then there was Phil and Kev's brother Sean, who had come down from Blackpool to see the gig. As they were driving back Ian spotted a group of Teds walking on the pavement towards the van. He told Kev to get close to the pavement and then put his foot down. The van had sliding doors, so as they got near, Ian slid open the doors and went whack! with a mic stand.

A couple of things came out of this. The van was later nicked in Covent Garden with all the gear in. And Ian's constant piss-take out of Phil for running away and hiding behind some dust bins when we were attacked. Phil, whose not used stage name was "Ronnie Volume" had to listen to Ian playing the guitar and singing the song "Working Class Hero" by John Lennon. The words became "Ronnie, Ron runaway, where have you been, hiding behind the bins from the Teddy boy's boots".

Also, a couple of days after the attack we were interviewed by Janet Street Porter for a TV program. The interview went along the lines of a rant from Ian about what the punks were going to do to the Teds. The interview was shown a few months later, when all the trouble had calmed down (**the interview in question can be seen on AinaSkins' Skrewdriver History DVD - Club28 remark**). This set it all off again and Skrewdriver became Public Enemy #1. The punk vs. Ted rivalry could be bad if you were in the wrong place at the wrong time. There was definitely trouble between the two.





**9: Why did you switch to the skinhead image? Was it important to you or just something you felt like doing?**

9: All of us had grown up with the skinhead, suedehead and bootboy fashions of the early '70's. I decided in 1977 that I had always been happier with the skinhead thing than the punk thing. So I got my haircut, boots, Levi jeans and jacket and away I went. Later, when Ian saw me--this was the time between Phil leaving and Ronnie joining--he decided the band should become a skinhead band. Ian was always well into the skinhead thing, he loved the violence. Kev was not too keen but went along with it.

**10: What was your favorite Skrewdriver song of the time? How did you feel about the quality of your recorded product? Did you feel "All Skrewed Up" and the two singles were good representations of the band?**

10: My favorite Skrewdriver song, and funny enough it is my two daughters favorite Hannah 16 and Rebecca 12, is "Too Much Confusion". All of the band thought that "All Skrewed Up" could have been done better. It was commonly thought that Chiswick always did things on the cheap as far as recording, advertising, etc. went. The album was recorded over a few days, it is virtually live, there were just a few overdubs on vocals and guitar. Trouble was all the tracks were over in 2-3 minutes. I'm no technician, I don't know why the album came out at 45 rpm. The songs on it were what we played live, so it was a good representation of the band. But we all felt the sound was a little tinny.

**11: What was your relationship with the band like? Did you guys all hang out together or go your separate ways offstage?**

11: The relationship with the band was always good. Me and Ian and Kev had all grown up together, been through school, cub scouts, holidays, parties, piss up, girlfriends and fights together. Life was really one big piss take.

**12: Did you have any political views at the time? Chiswick head Roger Armstrong has mentioned that you came from a "Northern Socialist" background.**

12: The political thing really did not come to the front until probably about 1979. Up until then Ian had always held racist views although he did not discover the National Front (NF) until maybe '79 or '80. That was when I heard of the NF. My family has always been interested in politics. My dad stood for Labour in local elections, I used to help on these as I grew up with politics. I voted for them in 1979 in the general election when they lost. Then I started to look closely at the party and I realized that their views did not match mine. So in

1980 I went in a different direction for politics. I used to talk to Roger and he was a Labour supporter. But I think he got this romantic idea that all Northern bands were working class, flat capped whippet owning Labour supporters. This just was not true.



**13: The band later reverted back to a punky image again. Did all this changing around annoy you? And here's a frivolous question: did you prefer one look to the other?**

13: The band did change image, but I think we were always closest to the skinhead thing. A lot of the reason for the change was that as a skinhead band we found it impossible to get gigs, because of the violence. We enjoyed the atmosphere, but we definitely lost tours and gigs because of the image.

**14: Kev and Ian later formed a Manchester version of the band. Were you any part of that?**

14: Yes, I played in that band, I can only remember doing one gig. MOTORHEAD at Queen Marys Hall in Blackburn. We lived in a rented house in Longsight, Manchester. I think this line-up was with Phil back and Chris Cumming joining in on guitar. That was the best line up we had. Ian wrote some good songs and we made some tapes but Chiswick did not like the change of direction. *(Around this period the band recorded the single "Built Up, Knocked Down" for TJM which was to be their last material until the NF era of the '80's.)*

**15: After the band split did you keep up with Punk at all? Did you listen to the later Oi bands, many of which claimed you as an influence?**

15: Yes, I have always followed new music and I listened to the Oi! bands. I have quite a lot of tapes and CD's of Nationalist bands. They are very good. My favourite Nationalist band is NO REMORSE, I love the track "The Winning Hand".

**16: When Ian reformed the band in London, did he invite you? Were you annoyed that he used the name again? How about the other members like Phil, Kev and Ron?**

16: When Ian reformed Skrewdriver, I was glad he had. I saw Ian regularly and knew his plans. I would have liked to join him but I had a steady job and was engaged, so it was not practical at the time. Kev had a successful glass business and we did not know where Phil was. Ian always kept in touch, he used to send me CD's and t-shirts. Whenever he came home we would visit and tell me what was going on with the band.





**17: Did it bother you that the new version kept the name but became NF involved and political?**

17: No. It didn't bother me at all. Me and Ian both became members of the NF in 1980. The trouble was again the bad publicity and being unable to get gigs. But Ian made his decision to go political and it was what he believed in right until the end.

**18: Did you keep in touch with Ian? Did you know any of the line-up besides him?**

18: Yes, we kept in touch. I last saw him on his last visit home. He came around and I had a wife and two daughters by then. He told me all about the band and going to prison and what it was like in Heanor. I have met and seen perform "Stigger" the guitarist in the last line up of Skrewdriver. He's very good, and still making good music.

**19: What was Ian Stuart really like? Did politics have any effect on your friendships in the band?**

19: What was Ian really like. Hell! I could write a book on Ian. There are many stories connected with Ian, coupled with the fact that we grew up together. Ian was funny to be around, he was a piss taker. Where we lived, even now, people who knew Ian nearly all had nicknames that have stuck, that were made up by Ian.

He was always very focused on what he was doing. And anyone who has ever met him will tell you that he could talk anyone round to his point of view. He was definitely charismatic and once you met him you didn't forget him. There is a good book about Ian called "Nazi Rock Star" by Paul London, which I helped with, and also one more in the pipeline. As a group we usually saw eye to eye. Ian and Phil had a good bust up about who was credited with writing material for "All Skewed Up". Also Kev, or more so his girlfriend, did not like the idea of turning skinhead. "You look ridiculous" was his girlfriend Kathy's comment. Politically, Ken, Phil and Ronnie were never really interested. But me and Ian were. It never affected our friendships. But it did stop Skrewdriver from making it on a commercial level.



**20: Earlier you mentioned your daughters. Ever let them listen to the old records? Do they like them? Do they like punk? Do you ever see young punks or skinheads and feel like telling them the old war stories. Ever run into anyone from the band?**

20: My daughters both listen to Skrewdriver and like punk. They laugh at the old pictures of the band but are very proud of the fact their dad was in a band, especially at the moment as there seems to be a lot of interest in the band. I do get to see a lot of young people through my daughters and there is a lot of interest. I see Ronnie quite a bit, he still lives locally. Kev I used to see but he has now moved to Canada where his brother has lived for years. I still see his Mum and Dad. Phil I have not seen for years, but I have heard he lives in Manchester and is still playing the guitar in a good Blues band.

**21: Are you surprised at how sought after and expensive the Chiswick records are these days?**

**Do people approach you about the band? Does anyone give you any problems about it because of the later activities of the band?**

21: Yes, I am surprised at how sought after Skrewdriver things are. I have just been sent a good new t-shirt of "Antisocial" and some bootleg tapes of Skrewdriver gigs from a guy named Sean from Dunn Loring, VA.

He also sent me a CD of his band, THE SUSPECTS, which is good. People still approach me about the

band. I never have had any problems, though of course Ian had plenty. Ending up in jail and finally having to leave London and move to Heanor because of the constant trouble.

I meet Skrewdriver fans at the "Red, White & Blue" festival that the BNP (British National Party) annual get together at Clitheroe in Lancashire. While I was there I met loads of fans and they told me that there were tribute concerts to Ian, usually near the anniversary of his death. Also, the main band at the event played "Too Much Confusion" and "Antisocial" and played them very well.



**22: If you could have done something differently, would you have? Famous last words or closing comments?**

22: I have enjoyed doing this and I am glad that there is still interest. I hope it has been of some help.

I often wonder that if we had stayed a punk band, and Phil would not have left after the album was released. With good publicity from Chiswick could we have made it as a mainstream punk band? But, on the other hand, Skrewdriver are known for what they did so I am happy with that. Also, I should have ducked quicker and saved my teeth in Putney!

### **Interview with Ian from "English Rose" skinzine 1984:**

With the release of 3 singles, a track on an E.P., and a new album. What can we expect musically from Skrewdriver in the future?

Ian: We are recording two tracks entitled "Tearing down the wall" and "Don't let them pull you down" for a new White Noise LP which will feature 10 bands, also we are soon to start recording a new LP for the German record company.

What are your views on fanzines like "Hard As Nails" which constantly slag bands like yourself down, but has the r3dskins splattered all over it?

Ian: I've never heard of "Hard As Nails" but it sounds like a typical left-wing propaganda.

We read about people like Joe Pearce, Ian Anderson and many other people getting hounded by the police, has the band experienced any hassle of the law?

Ian: We get the usual hollow threats of the r3ds, but we never take any notice of these, the police on the other hand have turned people back onto trains and arrested many people to stop them getting to gigs.

This is becoming increasingly worse as in east ham the other week they turned 200 people back onto the trains and shut down 2 tube stations, and also turned people off buses.

We'd like to thank everybody who didn't give up and managed to get to the gig to make it a success.

At the moment the R.A.C. is getting bigger and better, how do you see it expanding?

Ian: This year there will be two summer festivals so there will be no chance of police or r3d interference.

Also there will be more regular gigs as well as several European R.A.C. gigs this year.

What do you feel when you read in shit like Sounds how good the r3dskins are, and saying how shit you are?

Ian: We expect it, due to them being pathetic little mummys boy r3ds writing for the music press.

It makes you laugh really when these morons, who consider themselves to be real working class heroes, are working for big capitalist concerns who own the music papers, bushell now also writes for the sun.

They are all money grabbing hypocrites.

There are some skinheads turning casual and listening to body-popping music. What do you think of this?

Ian: Skinheads who turn casual and still remain friends with their old skinhead mates are alright so long as they keep their patriotic views as well, I can't stand the ones who grow their hair and all of a sudden start slagging off other skinheads, and start haning round blacks.